

Docket JP920000176US1

Appl. No.: 09/626,945

Filed: 07/27/2000

REMARKS

1. The disclosure is objected to because a sentence on page 5, line 27 should end in a period. The specification has responsively been amended to overcome the objection.

2. Claims 3 and 16-18 are objected to because of informalities. Claims have responsively been amended to overcome the objection. Other amendments have also been made to correct other informalities Applicant noted in reviewing the claims. Claim 8 has also been amended to be independent because relations among the elements of this claim and those of claim 1 were unclear. A version of the claims, reflecting amendments herein submitted, is set out above.

3. Claims 1, 2, 4, 14 and 15 stand rejected under 35 USC 102(e) as being anticipated by Groner (US 6,507,643). Claims 3, 6, 8-13 and 16-18 stand rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Groner in view of Lemaire et al. (5,444,768). Claims 5 and 7 stand rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Groner in view of Aktas et al. (6,584,181).

4. Applicant respectfully contends that claims 1, 2, 4 and 14, as amended herein, are allowable for the following reasons. Claim 15 is canceled herein. Groner addresses "a need for a system and method that uses speech recognition software to automatically convert voice messages into text messages suitable for sending as e-mail messages and for viewing on a display devices. [sic.]" Col. 2, lines 54-57. More specifically, Groner concerns a voice-to-electronic mail system and method for automatically receiving a voice message from a telephone caller, converting the message to an e-mail, calling a text display device, such as by a telephone call, and transferring the e-mail to the text display device. Col. 4, lines 19-55 ("Referring to FIG. 1, a network 20 includes the voice-to-electronic mail system 30 of the present invention. A caller uses a telephone 32 to call a recipient at another telephone 34 . . . If the recipient does not answer the call, the telephone network 36 routes the call to the recipient's voice mail system 38. The telephone network 36 provides call identification . . . to the voice-to-electronic mail system 30 . . . If the called party subscribes to the voice-to-electronic mail system 30, the voice-to-electronic mail system 30 receives a voice message from the caller, converts the voice message to a text message, and sends the text message, as an electronic mail (e-mail) message, to the recipient via the electronic mail system 40. The electronic mail system 40 sends the e-mail message over the packet-based network 42 for display on the recipient's text display device 44 . . . [which] may be associated with a telephone number, and the electronic mail system 40 calls that telephone number to send the text message to the recipient."). The present

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invention, by contrast, helps a person with a disability to interface with the user's computer, which contains an e-mail system. Page 1, lines 12-14, and page 5, lines 7-9. In all of the forms of the invention claimed in the present application, each and every claim either explicitly refers to and has a limitation concerning a "remote control device" (or words to that effect), or else depends upon a claim that does so. The method steps cited in the Office action as anticipating elements of claim one of the present application are steps performed in a computer system that implements the voice-to-electronic mail system, not in a remote control device. Groner, col. 6, lines 52-54 ("FIG. 4 is a flowchart providing an overview of the operation of the computer system 70 (FIG. 3) implementing the voice-to-electronic mail system 30 of FIG. 1.")

Groner teaches that the voice-to-electronic mail system is implemented *as a computer system*. Col. 5, lines 5-30 ("Referring to FIG. 3, a computer system 70 implements the voice-to-electronic mail system 30 (FIG. 1) . . ."). Groner makes no reference to any *remote control device* for remotely controlling a computer system by which a user may convert speech to text *in the remote control device*, as claimed in claim one for the present invention. Groner, col. 5, lines 5-30 ("The computer system 70 includes: a data processor (CPU) 72; a user interface 74, including a display 76, and one or more input devices, such as a mouse 78 and a keyboard 80; a memory 82, which may include random access memory as well as disk storage and other storage media; a disk controller 84 and disk drive 86 for retrieving information from and storing information to the disk drive 86; the information includes procedures and data; a voice mail system interface (VM I/F) 88 to transfer a call to the voice mail system; a telephone network (TN) interface 90 to receive a call from a caller; a network interface card (NIC) 92 that provides a packet-based interface for connecting to a remote server via a packet switched network such as the Internet; and one or more buses 96 for interconnecting the aforementioned elements of the computer system 70."). Also, Groner does not teach about any such remote control device by which a user may control the computer system for sending text (such as the text converted from speech) to an email system in the computer, and receiving text from the email system in the computer, as claimed in claim 1 for the present invention. Also, Groner does not teach about any such remote control device by which a user may control the computer system for selecting and accessing e-mail's in the email system in the computer, as claimed in claim one for the present invention. For these reasons Applicant contends Groner does not anticipate or obviate claims 1, 2 or 4.

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Claim 14 has been amended herein to set out additional limitations. Applicant contends that amended claim 14 is patentably distinct for reasons similar to those explained herein above regarding claim 1.

5. Applicant respectfully contends that claims 3, 6, 8-13 and 16-18 as amended herein, are allowable for the following reasons. Lemaire et al. concerns a "portable computer device for audible processing of messages stored at one or more remote central message facilities." Lemaire et al., Abstract. The portable computer device shown by Lemaire et al. is connected to a user's computer in FIG. 2. Likewise the remote control device of the present invention is coupled to a user's computer. But the portable computer device disclosed by Lemaire et al. does not have the same structure as the remote control device claimed according to the present invention, nor does it function with respect to the user's computer in the same fashion. Regarding function with respect to user's computer system, see Col. 8, lines 28-40 ("In a depicted embodiment of the present invention, microprocessor 40 utilizes an RS232 Serial Interface 300 which may be coupled to an ordinary so-called "personal" computer 302, such as the International Business Machines: PS/2 Model 25 which has been programmed to load the appropriate telephone numbers, passwords and access codes into portable computer device 10 via a well-known RS232 cable 304. Those skilled in the art will appreciate that a user may be provided appropriate menu-driven interfaces within personal computer 302 to facilitate programming portable computing device 10 with appropriate numbers, passwords and access codes while thus connected."). Regarding arrangement of the portable computer device of Lemur et al., the device does *not* perform speech-to-text conversion of e-mail messages.

The Office action combines the teaching of Groner with that of Lemaire et al., contending that Lemaire et al. teach about customization by the user of the remote control device of claim 1 in the present case such that the device speaks aloud the sender, date, subject, e-mail content and attachment for incoming mail (claim 3), and contending that Lemaire et al. teach about the remote control device being linked to the computer through radio frequency waves (claim 6). The portable computer device of Lemaire et al. *does* have text-to-speech conversion, but Applicant contends that claim 1 is patentably distinct for the reasons described above.

Claim 3 depends on claim 1 and therefore Applicant contends that claim 3 is also patentably distinct. Moreover, as the Office action acknowledges, Lemaire et al. do not explicitly

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teach that the portable computer device speaks aloud the sender, date, subject, e-mail content and attachment for incoming mail.

Regarding claim 6, the portable computer device is coupled to the central message facility by a radio frequency (cellular telephone system) signal, not to a user's computer system as in claim 3 of the present invention. See FIG. 1 (telephone connection 35). For at least this reason in addition to the reasons regarding claim 1 described above, upon which claim 6 depends, Applicant contends that claim 6 is patentably distinct.

The Office action also contends that Lemaire et al. teach about the remote control device having the claimed elements and limitations of claim 8 of the present application. Applicant is unable to determine what teaching there is in Lemaire et al. that the Office action contends corresponds to particular element or limitation of claim 8. Applicant notes, however, that Lemaire et al. do not teach or suggest that a first input-output of the processor means is connected to Random Access Memory (RAM) *which contains the speech-to-text data*, since Lemaire et al. do not teach that the portable computer device performs speech-to-text conversion of e-mail messages. For at least this reason in addition to the reasons regarding claim 1 described above, upon which claim 8 depends, Applicant contends that claim 8 is patentably distinct.

The Office action also contends that Lemaire et al. teach about the processor means of claim 8 being a digital signal processor (claim 9), a micro controller (claim 10) or an ASIC (claim 11), and about the ASIC including the entire circuit except the microphone, speaker, computer containing e-mail system and control panel (claim 12). The Office action also contends that Lemaire et al. teaches about the ASIC containing ROM, RAM, transmitter and receiver (claim 13). However, the processor means of Lemaire et al. is not connected to RAM containing speech-to-text data as in claim 8 upon which claims 9-13 depend, and, therefore, for at least this reason Applicant contends that claims 9-13 are patentably distinct.

The Office action also contends that Lemaire et al. teach about the microphone, signal conversions, etc. of claim 16. Claim 16 has been amended herein to include limitations regarding steps being performed by the remote control device. Applicant contends that amended claim 16 is patentably distinct for reasons similar to those explained herein above regarding claim 1.

The Office action also contends that Groner teaches about selecting email through speech or a control panel (claim 17) and about displaying the email on the remote control device (claim

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18). For at least the reasons regarding claim 16 described above, upon which claims 17 and 18 depend, Applicant contends that claims 17 and 18 are patentably distinct.

6. Applicant respectfully contends that claims 5 and 7, as amended herein, are allowable for the following reasons. The Office action also contends that Aktas et al. teach about the remote control device including means for speaking aloud the summary of an e-mail folder (claim 5) and about the e-mail system providing a audio announcement whenever new messages are received (claim 7). The invention of Aktas et al. concerns voice prompts in a telephone messaging system. Col. 2, lines 6 through 14. Aktas et al. describe announcing caller-defined or user-defined subjects for voice messages or message folders. Col. 9, lines 28-33. Applicant contends this does not suggest audibly announcing an email message subject header or an e-mail folder label, both of which are text, by a remote control device coupled to a user's computer system for email in the user's computer system, as in claim 5 of the present application. For at least these reasons in addition to the reasons regarding claim 1 described above, upon which claims 5 and 7 depend, Applicant contends that claims 5 and 7 are patentably distinct.

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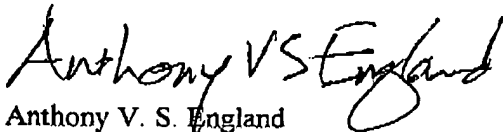
Appl. No.: 09/626,945
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Applicants have reviewed the prior art of record cited by but not relied upon by Examiner, and assert that the invention is patentably distinct.

REQUESTED ACTION

Applicants contend that the invention as claimed in accordance with amendments submitted herein is patentably distinct, and hereby request that Examiner grant allowance and prompt passage of the application to issuance.

Respectfully submitted,



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